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ABSTRACT

This report documents the progress that school districts in Kentucky have made in implementing provisions of the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990. This bill mandated that all elementary schools become non-graded, multi-age, multi-ability primary schools by the fall of 1993. During the spring of 1993, observations and teacher surveys were conducted in 46 schools in a geographically stratified random sample to determine the progress teachers were making in implementing the primary program. Principals in each of the schools were asked to recommend the classrooms in which they believed the teachers had made the greatest progress toward implementation. Among the results noted in the report are that teachers have made some progress in designing flexible physical environments that facilitate a variety of group and individual activities. Nevertheless, the classrooms were still teacher-dominated, possessed few learning centers, and exhibited few instances of discovery learning, student-initiated activities, and theme units. Also noted are major weaknesses in the area of ongoing, authentic assessment and the lack of parent involvement programs. Recommendations for staff development and school policy are listed. Five appendixes provide copies of the evaluation criteria, rating scales, the teacher interview form, the teacher survey form, and mean ratings. (MDM)

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Kentucky's Primary Program: A Progress Report

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Institute on Education Reform
University of Kentucky

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Connie Bridge
University of Kentucky

Paige Carney
University of Kentucky

Kay Freeland
Rowan County Schools

Ric Hovda
University of Louisville

Willis Johnson
Murray State University

Diane Kyle
University of Louisville

Shirley Long
Eastern Kentucky University

Ellen McIntyre
University of Louisville

Phyllis Oakes
Morehead State University

Rebecca Powell
Georgetown University

Lynne Smith
Northern Kentucky University

Betty Steffy
University of Kentucky

Lora Tyson
Eastern Kentucky University

Jacqueline Vance
Eastern Kentucky University

Rosa Weaver
Principal, Hinsdale Elementary

Melinda Willis
University of Kentucky

Vicki Willis
University of Kentucky

Paul Wirtz
Eastern Kentucky University

UKERA

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UKERA Occasional Papers
Institute on Education Reform, University of Kentucky
101 Taylor Education Building, Lexington, Kentucky 40506-0001
(606) 257-6734

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Nawanna Fairchild, formerly acting Associate Commissioner for Learning Support Services for the Kentucky Department of Education, assisted in sending out letters to the schools soliciting their participation in the study.

Classroom observations were conducted by researchers from most of Kentucky's institutions of higher education. They are listed on the title page. Many of these individuals also attended several meetings in which we discussed the methodology of the study, analyzed the results, and drew conclusions from these results. These busy faculty members gave their time to this study without compensation.

Paige Carney, currently Assistant Director of the Institute on Education Reform, has spent numerous hours doing the statistical analyses and co-authoring multiple drafts of this report. Charmaine Powell, staff assistant in the Institute, contributed her substantial abilities in desktop publishing to the production of the final report.

The Institute on Education Reform paid all duplicating, mailing, and travel costs related to this study and contributed the time of the director, assistant director, and staff assistant during all phases of the study and the preparation of the manuscript.

Connie A. Bridge
Director, Institute on Education Reform

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In June, 1990, Kentucky passed the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA), which mandated a complete restructuring of the Kentucky educational system in the areas of finance, governance, and curriculum. One of the mandates that has had immediate and far reaching implications has been the requirement for all of Kentucky's elementary schools to become non-graded multi-age, multi-ability primary schools by the fall of 1993.

During January to May of 1993, researchers from various universities across the state of Kentucky completed a study on the primary program. The intent of the study was to gather information that would provide a "snapshot" view of the progress toward full implementation of primary school programs.

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

Sample

Observations were conducted in a geographically stratified random sample of 46 primary schools in the eight regional service center areas in the state. The researchers were university professors and advanced graduate students from the state higher education institutions, all of whom are specialists in literacy or early childhood education.

Letters were sent in advance to the principals in each of the schools explaining the nature of the study and asking them to identify the teacher whom they judged to have made the most progress toward implementation of the primary program. The researchers called the schools in advance to schedule the date of the observation, so that teachers were aware that they would be observed.

Observation Focus

The researchers used a structured observation guide (See Appendix A) organized around the seven critical attributes of the primary program as identified by the Kentucky Department of Education (1993):

1. Developmentally appropriate educational practices
2. Multi-age and multi-ability classrooms

3. Continuous progress
4. Authentic assessment
5. Qualitative reporting methods
6. Professional teamwork
7. Positive parent involvement

The seven critical attributes have been defined by the Kentucky Department of Education (1993) as follows:

Developmentally Appropriate Practices. Developmentally appropriate practices means providing curriculum and instruction that addresses the physical, social, intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic/artistic needs of young learners and allows them to progress through an integrated curriculum at their own rate and pace.

Multi-age and Multi-Ability Classrooms. Multi-age and multi-ability classrooms means the flexible grouping and regrouping of children of different ages, sex, and abilities who may be assigned to the same teacher(s) for more than one year.

Continuous Progress. Continuous progress means that students will progress through the primary school program at their own rate without comparisons to the rates of others or consideration of the number of years in school. Retention and promotion within the primary school program are not compatible with continuous progress.

Authentic Assessment. Authentic assessment means assessment that occurs continually in the context of the learning environment and reflects actual learning experiences that can be documented through observation, anecdotal records, journals, logs, work samples, conferences, and other methods.

Qualitative Reporting. Qualitative reporting means that children's progress is communicated to families through various home-school methods of communication which focus on the growth and development of the whole child.

Professional Teamwork. Professional teamwork refers to all professional staff including primary teachers, administrators, special education teachers, teacher assistant/aides, itinerant teachers, and support personnel who communicate and plan on a regular basis to meet the needs of groups as well as individual children.

Positive Parent Involvement. Parent involvement means relationships between school and home, individuals, or groups that enhance communication, promote understanding, and increase opportunities for children to experience success.

Observation Ratings

After completing the classroom observations to determine the degree to which the seven critical attributes were being implemented, the researchers rated various aspects of the classroom on a scale of 1-4, with 1 indicating that the observer saw "no evidence" of implementation, 2 indicating "little evidence," 3 "moderate evidence," and 4 "extensive evidence" that the attribute was being implemented in the classroom (See Appendix B for Rating Scale). Teacher interviews were conducted to enable observers to find out about aspects of the program that were not readily observable (See Appendix C for Interview Protocol). Teachers also filled out a survey regarding their judgement of the amount of professional support they had received from various sources as they attempted to implement the primary program (See Appendix D for Teacher Survey).

DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

Data included the numerical ratings based on observations of major aspects of the primary program, the notes of the raters on the observation and interview protocols, and the numerical ratings on the teacher survey. Researchers agreed that the numerical ratings alone failed to capture the richness of the observational notes, so each researcher looked over his/her observation notes and interview protocols as well as the protocols of one or two other researchers. After perusal of these protocols, each researcher made a list of some tentative conclusions that seemed to emerge from the observations and interviews. Then, the researchers met for a day to discuss their preliminary conclusions and to arrive at some mutually agreeable summary statements that captured the essence of their findings. In the following presentation of the results, the researchers discuss the numerical ratings within the context of the conclusions reached from the observations, interviews, and teacher surveys.

RESULTS

The seven critical attributes of the primary program are closely related to one another. Because of this interrelatedness, the findings are grouped for purposes of discussion into the following four categories: learning environment, developmentally appropriate practices, assessment, and educational partnerships.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Scores for various aspects of the learning environment were grouped into two subcategories; physical environment and social-emotional environment (See Table 1 & Appendix E).

TABLE 1. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	MEAN
Flexible Layout	3.370
Variety of Areas	3.196
Learning Centers	2.761
Print Rich Environment	3.109
Student Work Displayed	2.739
Variety of Instructional Materials	3.239
TOTAL MEAN FOR PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	**3.069**

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL ENVIRONMENT	MEAN
Free Movement	3.065
Active Engagement	3.413
Student Talk	3.261
Student/Teacher Interaction	3.543
Positive Discipline	3.522
Active Child Involvement	3.233
TOTAL MEAN FOR SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL ENVIRONMENT	**3.346**

Physical Environment

Since it is important to "set the stage" for learning, researchers looked first at whether the teachers were arranging a physical environment conducive to the implementation of the primary program. The highest mean score in the area of physical environment was flexible layout of the classroom. Teachers appeared to be making progress toward creating a flexible environment by replacing desks with tables and/or clustering desks together as tables. They had also created a variety of areas in the classrooms, showing that teachers were arranging their classrooms to accommodate large group, small group, and individual work.

There was also moderate evidence that a variety of instructional materials were being used in the classroom. However, there was a wide discrepancy from school to school in the amount and type of instructional materials available. Many teachers have been very resourceful in creating a rich learning environment by writing grants and requesting materials from parents. Several teachers reported that they had spent a great deal of their own money buying the materials needed for the primary program.

There was moderate evidence of a print rich environment in these classrooms but little evidence of functional writing generated by students. Furthermore, observations revealed that there was very little student work of any kind displayed in the classroom. Most of the items displayed in the classroom were teacher made and if students' work was displayed, it was usually "cookie-cutter" art where all the art products were similar.

One of the lowest mean scores related to the presence and nature of learning centers in the classroom. Observers saw a few learning centers in the classrooms, but they were not observed consistently across the primary classrooms. Most frequently observed types of learning centers were reading and listening. For the most part, learning centers were teacher-directed and task-oriented rather than child centered and exploratory in nature.

Overall, teachers appear to have made progress toward creating physical environments conducive to the implementation of the primary program. They have arranged the desks and tables flexibly to accommodate a variety of group and individual activities and supplied the classrooms with many appropriate instructional materials. However, the two weakest areas,

display of student work and design and use of learning centers, signify the need for teachers to learn more about ways to set up learning centers in which students work individually and in small groups on developmentally appropriate activities and ways to involve students in displaying their own work and communicating with one another through functional writing.

Social-Emotional Environment

The emotional climate in a primary classroom should be one that encourages exploration, risk-taking, and self-initiated activities. Students need to feel safe, secure, and free to communicate with one another and the teacher. Observations revealed that teachers were creating positive social-emotional environments. Mean scores for social-emotional environment were higher than those for the physical environment. The highest mean score for this subcategory was student/teacher interaction, suggesting that many teachers were interacting with students in positive ways and providing support and assistance to their students. Overall, mean scores indicated that primary classrooms had positive social environments, students were adjusting well, and students had a high level of engagement.

However, mean scores for both free movement and student talk suggested that student movement and classroom discussions were still predominantly teacher initiated and directed. Teachers provided students with the opportunity to move and talk in the learning environment but most of those experiences were directed by the teacher. Most of the scores from these six areas indicate that teachers are creating positive social-emotional climates in their classrooms; however, they still need to learn ways to allow free movement and student choice in the classroom.

DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES

Researchers grouped developmentally appropriate practices into three subcategories; integrated instructional practices,varied instructional strategies, and flexible grouping. The highest mean score was varied instructional strategies, followed by flexible grouping, and integrated instructional practices (See Table 2).

TABLE 2. DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES

INTEGRATED INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES	MEAN
Flexible Scheduling	3.043
Broad Based Themes & Units	2.783
Authentic Problem Solving & Questions	2.600
Integrated Language Arts	3.087
Meaning Centered Writing	3.156
Integrated Math	3.000
Discovery Science	2.610
Activity-Oriented Social Studies	2.467
Other Subject Areas	2.310
TOTAL MEAN FOR INTEGRATED INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES	**2.790**

FLEXIBLE GROUPING	MEAN
TOTAL MEAN FOR FLEXIBLE GROUPING	**2.854**

VARIED INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES	MEAN
Varied Instructional Delivery	3.130
Student/Teacher Initiated Activities	2.804
TOTAL MEAN FOR VARIED INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES	**2.967**

Integrated Instruction

Observations revealed that students were engaged in many meaning centered writing activities and that teachers were making progress toward implementing whole-language activities. Teachers were incorporating the use of trade books in reading instruction and theme centered units. On the other hand, mean scores exhibit that many teachers were making little progress toward integrated instruction and that there were few examples of teachers developing broad based themes. The themes that were observed focused on narrow topics and showed no evidence that they were designed to meet Kentucky's learning standards.

In addition, observations revealed that teachers were scheduling large blocks of time for instruction, but these blocks were primarily devoted to language arts and mathematics with little time for social studies, science, and other areas of the curriculum. In fact, observers saw almost no science and social studies being taught. In many classrooms, there was little evidence that children were using manipulatives to discover math and science concepts. Occasionally, science and mathematic manipulatives were visible in the classroom but were not in active use or were inaccessible to the students. Many teachers were still providing direct instruction in math and using a single textbook in grade level groups.

Grouping Practices

There were few indications that teachers were using flexible grouping. In fact, researchers found that most groups appeared to be fixed ability groups rather than flexible skill groups or interest groups. Most of the instructional day was devoted to large group instruction. It did not appear from the observations that teachers understood how to use flexible instructional groups.

Varied Instructional Practices

The next subcategory, varied instructional strategies, included two areas; balanced instructional delivery and balanced student/teacher initiation. Balanced instructional delivery was defined by the researchers as instruction that included a variety of instructional techniques: direct instruction, cooperative learning, independent learning, and adaptations for different learning styles and multiple intelligences. There was some evidence that teachers were using a variety of instructional techniques, but researchers observed few instances of cooperative learning or adaptation of the curriculum to multiple intelligences and varied learning styles. The lowest score, student/teacher initiated activities, suggested that students were rarely allowed to initiate learning activities. Researchers found that there were far more teacher initiated activities than student initiated activities.

ASSESSMENT

Mean scores for assessment were generated from three subcategories; ongoing assessment, student evaluation, and qualitative reporting methods. Several aspects were observed in each subcategory (See Table 3).

TABLE 3. ASSESSMENT

ONGOING ASSESSMENT	MEAN
Continuous and Frequent Assessment	2.652
Authentic Assessment	2.717
A Variety of Assessment Methods	2.739
Assessment in All Areas of Student Growth	2.550
TOTAL MEAN FOR ONGOING ASSESSMENT	**2.696**

STUDENT EVALUATION	MEAN
Student Self-Evaluation	1.913
Parent Involvement	2.000
TOTAL MEAN FOR STUDENT EVALUATION	**1.957**

QUALITATIVE REPORTING METHODS	MEAN
Qualitative Conferences	2.457
Qualitative Progress Reports	3.044
TOTAL MEAN FOR QUALITATIVE REPORTING METHODS	**2.750**

Teachers in primary classrooms are expected to provide for the continuous progress of multi-age, multi-ability students in their classrooms. They can do so only if they are continually monitoring student progress through ongoing authentic assessment. In the subcategory ongoing assessment, all mean scores were low which means that teachers were not using a

variety of authentic assessment measures on a frequent and continuous basis to assess student progress in all areas of the curriculum.

Researchers found little evidence that a variety of assessment methods were being employed by the teachers. For example, there was limited use of performance tasks or projects for assessment of student progress. Although teachers were having students keep journals, they were not using them for systematic evaluation of student progress in writing. A few teachers were collecting portfolios, but these appeared to be folders of student work rather than ongoing assessment portfolios. While a few teachers were using anecdotal records, some teachers stated that they needed more information on ways to use anecdotal records and ways to accommodate the time demands of keeping those records. Several teachers who mentioned that they were overwhelmed with the time required to conduct authentic assessment.

There was no evidence that teachers were involving students in self-evaluation or in peer evaluation. Only a couple of student teacher conferences were observed and researchers did not see students participating in peer conferences. Only a few schools invited parents to participate in evaluating their children's progress. Researchers found that most schools involved parents in student evaluation only by requesting their signature on their child's report card. Few teachers reported having parent teacher conferences except on an "as needed" basis. They explained that there was no time built into the school schedule for conferences and they were not compensated for the extra time spent in parent conferences, so they were not conducting conferences on a routine basis. There was substantial evidence that schools were moving away from traditional report cards with letter grades toward a more descriptive format using a combination of checklists and narrative comments.

EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

The aspects related to educational partnerships were divided into two subcategories; professional teamwork and parent involvement. Scores in both subcategories indicated little evidence of implementation (See Table 4).

TABLE 4. EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

PROFESSIONAL TEAMWORK	MEAN
Professional Teamwork with Regular Teachers	2.848
Professional Teamwork with Special Teachers	2.522
Planning Time	2.609
Level of Collaboration	2.913
TOTAL MEAN FOR PROFESSIONAL TEAMWORK	**2.723**

PARENT INVOLVEMENT	MEAN
Parent Involvement in Classrooms	2.196
Parent Involvement in Policy Making	2.239
Parent Involvement in Student Evaluation	1.696
Parent Involvement in Support of Learning	2.587
Parent Involvement in Communication	2.630
TOTAL MEAN FOR PARENT INVOLVEMENT	**2.270**

Professional Teamwork

The mean scores reflect that some collaboration and teamwork were evident among regular classroom teachers on primary teams and a few were collaborating with special area teachers. Most teachers said they viewed collaboration with other teachers on their team as a positive aspect of the teaming process.

However, many teachers reported that collaboration is limited because they do not have adequate planning time within the school day and therefore, must meet with other teachers before and after school for team planning. Most teachers stated that although more planning time is available now than before they were asked to implement the primary program, the time is still not adequate.

Parent Involvement

Scores related to the subcategory of parent involvement showed little evidence that parents are viewed as partners in their child's education. Observations and interviews indicated that parent involvement was minimal and occurred primarily through written communication to parents and informational meetings. Types of parental involvement in the classrooms are still very traditional, such as volunteer tutoring and clerical work.

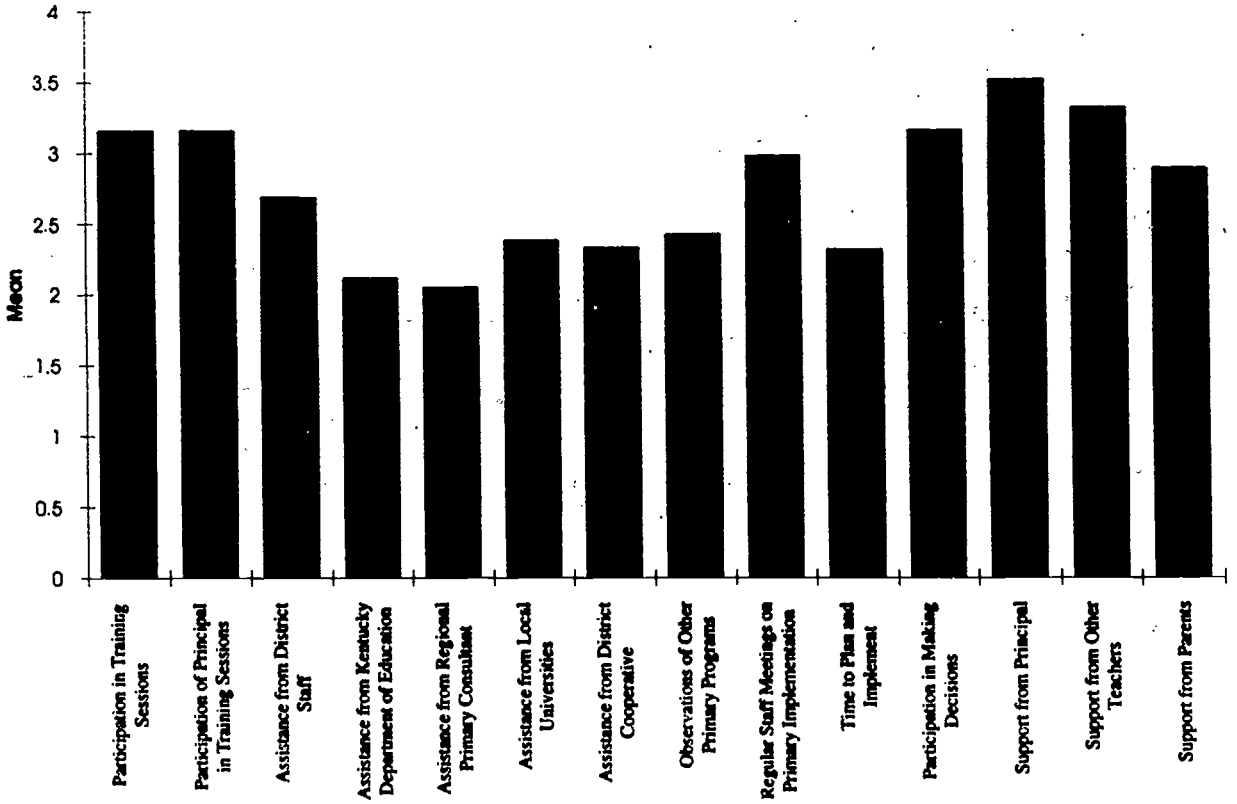
SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS DURING IMPLEMENTATION

Researchers were interested in the amount and type of support teachers had received as they were implementing the primary program. Thus, teachers were asked to rate the various types of professional support on a survey. Teachers responded to the areas by circling the word that best described the amount of support they had received as they implemented their school's primary program. Ratings were on a scale from 1-4, with 1 indicating "none," 2 a "limited" amount, 3 an "adequate" amount, and 4 an "extensive" amount (See Table 5).

TABLE 5. TEACHER SURVEY	MEAN
Participation in Training Sessions	3.156
Participation of Principal in Training Sessions	3.156
Assistance from District Staff	2.689
Assistance from Kentucky Department of Education	2.111
Assistance from Regional Primary Consultant	2.047
Assistance from Local Universities	2.378
Assistance from District Cooperative	2.326
Observations of Other Primary Programs	2.422
Regular Staff Meetings on Primary Implementation	2.978
Time to Plan and Implement	2.311
Participation in Making Decisions	3.156
Support from Principal	3.511
Support from Other Teachers	3.311
Support from Parents	2.889

Teachers indicated that their principals had provided the most support during implementation followed by support from other teachers. Many teachers also felt that they had an adequate number of opportunities to participate in primary training and in decisions related to the implementation of the primary school. Additionally, teachers believed that there was adequate participation of the principal in staff development and that there were regular meetings focusing on the implementation of the primary school. However, teachers felt that they had not had enough time to plan for the implementation of the new primary program. Ratings indicated that teachers believed that they had received limited assistance from the regional primary consultant, from the Kentucky Department of Education, from the educational cooperative in their area, and from local universities. Teachers were slightly more positive about the assistance received from their own district staff (See Graph 1).

GRAPH 1. RATINGS FROM TEACHER SURVEY



Organizational Structures

There were several areas of the primary program that could not be determined simply by observation. Therefore, the researchers conducted interviews with teachers and principals to ask specific questions regarding these aspects of the primary program. One such area related to the manner in which schools had organized to achieve multi-age, multi-ability grouping. Researchers found that schools are employing many different organizational structures. For example, approximately half of the classrooms had groups with two ages together; whereas, in a number of other classrooms three ages were grouped together. Overall, there were more dual-age classrooms than there were multi-age classrooms. In a few schools, students were grouped in the primary classrooms in combination dual-age groups for part of the day and in single-age groups for the rest of the day, in combination multi-age and single-age, and in combination dual-age and multi-age groups.

Many teachers stated that the reason they grouped students by dual-age groups was that they did not feel comfortable grouping multi-aged children in one classroom and that they did not believe that it was educationally sound to do so. Therefore, most of the teachers decided to group students by two age groups instead of three or four age groups.

Another question addressed the issue of including five-year -olds in the primary program. Most of the primary classrooms at the time of the interviews in Spring, 1993, were not including five-year-old students in the primary classroom. If five-year-old students were included, it was for a minimal amount of time and occurred for a small part of the school day. Again, teachers questioned the educational soundness of including five-year-olds in the primary program.

Researchers also asked teachers about their inclusion of special needs students. The interviews revealed that teachers were including special needs children in a variety of ways. For example, some special needs students attended a resource room in the morning and attended a primary classroom in the afternoon; whereas, other special needs students were given assistance by the special education teacher working with them in the primary classroom.

Overall, most of the primary teachers were including special needs students to some extent during the school day.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

During Spring 1993, researchers observed in 46 classrooms in a geographically stratified random sample of schools throughout Kentucky to determine the progress teachers were making in the implementation of the primary program. In these randomly selected schools, the principals were asked to recommend the classroom in which they believed the teachers had made the greatest progress toward implementation. Researchers spent a day observing in each of these classrooms, rated the classrooms on various aspects of the primary program, interviewed the teachers, and asked the teachers to fill out a survey regarding the support they had received from various sources during the implementation process.

In some ways, this study could be regarded as a study of best practices since the teachers who were observed were recommended by the principals of their respective schools. Thus, it could be assumed that these teachers' classrooms represented the best approximation of the vision of a good primary classroom within a given school. On the other hand, the schools were randomly selected. Therefore, it is not surprising that there was a wide range in the quality of implementation even within these recommended classrooms. In spite of these variations, some patterns emerged.

Teachers have made progress in designing flexible physical environments that facilitate a variety of group and individual activities. They are also successfully creating positive social-emotional climates characterized by high quality teacher student interactions and active engagement on the part of the students. Nevertheless, the classrooms were still teacher dominated with few opportunities for self-initiated student activities.

Very few learning centers were observed except for reading and listening centers. The quality of activities provided in these centers indicated teachers' lack of understanding of the potential of learning centers in that most of the activities in the centers were not open-ended and exploratory in nature, nor did they encourage or allow for student initiation.

Although teachers had arranged their schedules to accommodate large blocks of time, they were still devoting most of these large blocks of time to reading and mathematics instruction with little integration of other content areas. Many teachers were implementing integrated language arts and meaning-centered reading and writing instruction, but researchers observed few examples of discovery science, activity-oriented social studies, or other areas of the curriculum being taught. A few teachers were using theme centered units in instruction, but these units were devoted to narrow topics rather than to broad-based themes and real-life problems and questions.

Major weaknesses were observed in the area of ongoing, authentic assessment. Teachers appeared to lack knowledge of authentic assessment techniques and said that they needed more time and training to help them learn new methods of assessment. There was no evidence that teachers knew how to involve students in self-evaluation or in peer evaluation. The most positive finding related to assessment was that teachers were using qualitative report cards with checklists and/or narrative comments rather than letter grades alone. They reported that they were not having parent teacher conferences on a routine basis, as no time is built into the school schedule for such conferences and they are not compensated for conferences conducted outside school hours.

Teachers reported that working together in professional teams is enjoyable and stimulating, but complained about the lack of time they have for collaboration and planning. Most stated that they had to spend time before and after school planning with team members, even though more time for planning had been allocated since the primary school mandate.

Few parent involvement activities were observed or reported. Communication with parents primarily involved sending home newsletters and conducting informational parent meetings. There were few opportunities for interactive communication with parents or parent involvement in classrooms.

To accomplish the objective of multi-age grouping, over half of the teachers employed dual-age groups. About one fourth of the classrooms were using multi-age groupings. Several were using various combinations of single-age, dual-age, and multi-age grouping for parts

of the school day. Teachers expressed concern regarding their ability to deal effectively with multi-age groups and the educational soundness of these grouping patterns. Very few of the teachers were involving five-year-olds for more than the required minimum time. They reported that the half day kindergarten schedule made five-year-old inclusion difficult to manage. Furthermore, many did not feel it was in the best interests of the five-year-olds to include them with the older children.

Teachers reported that they had received a great deal of support from their principals and their fellow teachers as they implemented the primary program. They felt that they had several opportunities to participate in primary school training sessions, in regular staff meetings related to primary school, and in decision making about primary program implementation. Nevertheless, they said they needed more time to plan and implement.

Probably the most frequently recurring theme was that implementing all of the critical attributes of the primary program simultaneously in such a short time period was difficult and unrealistic and that they needed more time and training before they could do so successfully.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT

If teachers are to successfully implement the primary program, they need more staff development in the following areas:

1. Understanding the concept of continuous progress and the role that ongoing authentic assessment plays in monitoring continuous progress.
2. Assessing children's progress using ongoing, authentic assessment techniques within the context of daily instruction.
3. Designing learning center activities that are child-centered and exploratory and that focus on students' attainment of Kentucky's learning standards.
4. Conducting integrated instruction that not only incorporates language arts but also math, science, social studies, and the other areas of the curriculum.
5. Organizing instruction around Kentucky's six learning goals and 75 learning standards.
6. Helping families learn to support children's learning.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY

1. Provide common planning time within the school day.
2. Provide days within the school schedule for parent-teacher conferences.
3. Help schools develop appropriate ways to integrate five-year-olds in the program.

REFERENCES

State regulations and recommended best practices for Kentucky's primary program. (1993) Frankfort, KY: Kentucky Department of Education.

Appendix A

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

CRITERION	COMMENTS
A. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
1. Layout *Note: Include a simple diagram of classroom* ☐ Flexibility - moveable tables/chairs ☐ Attractive, inviting	
2. Areas provided for various groups ☐ Large Groups ☐ Small Groups ☐ Individual ☐ Quiet ☐ Active ☐ Other	
3. Learning Centers ☐ Reading ☐ Listening ☐ Writing ☐ Dramatic Play/ blocks/sand & water ☐ Science ☐ Theme ☐ Other	

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (cont.)

CRITERION	COMMENTS
4. Print rich environment ☐ Variety of books - e.g. informational, fiction, reference, magazines ☐ Environmental print e.g. signs, directions, posters ☐ Other	
5. Student work is displayed ☐ Work is current ☐ Work shows variety (Not "cookie cutter" art) ☐ Functional use of reading & writing e.g. directions, messages, name on sign up sheets	
6. Variety of instructional materials ☐ Manipulatives ☐ Audio tapes/videos ☐ Models ☐ Computer ☐ CD ROM/Laser disc ☐ Other	

CRITERION	COMMENTS
B. SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL ENVIRONMENT	
1. Movement ☐ Students move at own discretion ☐ Student movement directed by teacher	
2. Active Engagement ☐ Minimum of teacher lecture ☐ Discussions ☐ Manipulatives ☐ Students on task ☐ Other	
3. Student Talk ☐ Student initiated ☐ Related to task ☐ Balance of teacher/student talk ☐ Opportunities for student/student talk	
4. Teacher Interaction *Balance of interactions* ☐ One to one ☐ Small group ☐ Large group	
5. Positive Discipline	

DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES

CRITERION | **COMMENTS**

IS THERE EVIDENCE OF:

A. INTEGRATED CURRICULUM

1. Scheduling
   - ☐ Large blocks of time
   - ☐ Flexible
   - ☐ Content areas integrated

2. Broad based thematic units & projects
   - ☐ Cross subject boundaries
   - ☐ Broad themes
   - ☐ Reflects Valued Outcomes

3. Authentic problems & questions
   - ☐ Problem solving activities
   - ☐ Open ended discussion questions
   - ☐ Activities related to children's interests/environment

DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES (cont.)

CRITERION	COMMENTS
B. INTEGRATED LANGUAGE ARTS	
1. Meaning centered reading *(List types of materials, e.g. basal anthology, trade books, and other materials)* ☐ Integrated throughout curriculum ☐ Skills taught in context ☐ Comprehension emphasized ☐ Opportunities to read ☐ teacher reads aloud ☐ students read to one another ☐ students/teacher read silently ☐ SSR/Independent reading time	
2. Meaning Centered Writing ☐ Integrated throughout curriculum ☐ Meaning emphasized ☐ Skills taught within context of student's writing ☐ Opportunities to write *(List # of times where applicable)* ☐ Writing portfolio/Journal writing ☐ Students at all phases of writing process ☐ Student choice of topic ☐ Writing Conferences ☐ Author's chair	

DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES (cont.)

CRITERION	COMMENTS
C. INTEGRATION OF CONTENT AREAS	
1. Problem Solving Mathematics *(List type of materials, e.g. BOXIT, OPENING EYES, MATH THEIR WAY, and math series)* ☐ Integrated where appropriate ☐ Direct instruction where appropriate ☐ Manipulatives, concrete materials ☐ Problem solving focus ☐ Authentic tasks	
2. Discovery Science ☐ Integrated where appropriate ☐ Direct instruction where appropriate ☐ Experimentation/exploration ☐ Authentic task	
3. Activity-oriented Social Studies *(List specific programs where applicable, e.g. SKIS, ACES)* ☐ Integrated where appropriate ☐ Direct instruction where appropriate ☐ Authentic tasks ☐ Problem solving	
4. Other subject areas	

DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES (cont.)

CRITERION	COMMENTS
D. ACTIVE CHILD INVOLVEMENT *(List specific activities)* ☐ Learning centers ☐ Experimentation/Exploration ☐ Manipulatives	
E. VARIED INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES 1. Balanced instructional delivery ☐ Direct instruction ☐ Cooperative learning ☐ Independent ☐ Learning styles/multiple intelligences 2. Choice ☐ Teacher initiated ☐ Student initiated	
F. FLEXIBLE GROUPING ☐ Small groups 2-6 ☐ Large groups 7-up ☐ Whole class ☐ Individual ☐ Interest groups ☐ Skill ☐ Ability ☐ Mainstream special needs	

ASSESSMENT

CRITERION	COMMENTS
IS THERE EVIDENCE OF:	
A. ONGOING AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT	
1. Portfolios ☐ Writing ☐ Reading ☐ Math ☐ Other	
2. Performance tasks ☐ Projects ☐ Samples of work	
3. Observation ☐ Check lists ☐ Anecdotal records	
4. Student self evaluation	

ASSESSMENT (cont.)

CRITERION	COMMENTS
B. QUALITATIVE	
1. Anecdotal/narrative reports	
2. Video/audio tapes	
3. Journals	
4. Conferencing *(Note number of times where applicable)* ☐ Adult ☐ Parent ☐ Peer	
5. Progress reports ☐ Sample *(if possible)* ☐ Changes	
C. DOCUMENTS SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, PHYSICAL, AESTHETIC AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT	

EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

NOTE: Use teacher interview to clarify areas that are not observable

CRITERION **COMMENTS**

A. PROFESSIONAL TEAMWORK

1. Types of teams
   - ☐ Teachers in self contained classroom
   - ☐ Teachers share students
   - ☐ Families *(Specify type)*

2. Team membership
   - ☐ Classroom teachers
   - ☐ Classroom and "special" teachers
     (Specify "special" teacher)

3. Regular planning time
   (Specify # of days per week and length of time per day)
   - ☐ Individual
   - ☐ With team
   - ☐ With "special" teachers

4. Regular communication
   - ☐ "Special" teachers
   - ☐ Intermediate teachers (4 & 5)
   - ☐ Preschool/Kindergarten teachers

EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS (cont.)

CRITERION	COMMENTS
B. PARENT INVOLVEMENT	
1. In classrooms ☐ Clerical ☐ Teaching aides ☐ Other	
2. In policy making ☐ SBDM ☐ Other	
3. In student evaluation ☐ Conferences ☐ Two way communication	
4. In supporting student learning at home	
5. Communication ☐ Newsletters ☐ Meetings ☐ Other	

Appendix B

RATING SCALE FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL OBSERVATIONS

After you have completed your observation and interview, please rate the primary classroom in the following areas. Base your rating on the evidence you observed in the classroom and the comments of the teacher during the interview. Use the following scale:

1 = No evidence
2 = Little evidence
3 = Moderate evidence
4 = Extensive evidence

	No evidence	Little evidence	Moderate evidence	Extensive evidence
LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (44 points)				
A. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT				
1. Layout flexible	1	2	3	4
2. Variety of areas provided	1	2	3	4
3. Learning centers	1	2	3	4
4. Print rich environment	1	2	3	4
5. Student work displayed	1	2	3	4
6. Variety of instructional materials	1	2	3	4
TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS = 24				
B. SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL ENVIRONMENT				
1. Free movement	1	2	3	4
2. Active engagement	1	2	3	4
3. Student talk	1	2	3	4
4. Teacher interaction	1	2	3	4
5. Positive discipline	1	2	3	4
TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS = 20				

DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES (52 points)

A.	INTEGRATED CURRICULUM					
	1.	Flexible scheduling	1	2	3	4
	2.	Broad based themes/units	1	2	3	4
	3.	Authentic problem/questions	1	2	3	4
B.	INTEGRATED LANGUAGE ARTS					
	1.	Meaning centered reading	1	2	3	4
	2.	Meaning centered writing	1	2	3	4
C.	INTEGRATION OF CONTENT AREAS (Reflects appropriate balance of integration and direct instruction)					
	1.	Problem Solving Mathematics	1	2	3	4
	2.	Discovery Science	1	2	3	4
	3.	Activity-oriented Social Studies	1	2	3	4
	4.	Other subject areas	1	2	3	4

TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS = 36

D.	ACTIVE CHILD INVOLVEMENT		1	2	3	4
E.	VARIED INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES					
	1.	Balanced instruction delivery	1	2	3	4
	2.	Balance of student/teacher initiation	1	2	3	4
F.	FLEXIBLE GROUPING		1	2	3	4

TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS = 16

ASSESSMENT (32 points)

A.	ONGOING AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT					
	1.	Continuity and frequency	1	2	3	4

2.	Authenticity	1	2	3	4
3.	Variety of methods	1	2	3	4
4.	Student self evaluation	1	2	3	4
5.	Parent involvement	1	2	3	4
B.	QUALITATIVE				
1.	Conferences	1	2	3	4
2.	Progress reports	1	2	3	4
C.	EVALUATION OF ALL AREAS OF STUDENT GROWTH	1	2	3	4

TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS = 32

EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS (32 points)

A.	PROFESSIONAL TEAMWORK				
1.	With regular teachers	1	2	3	4
2.	With special teachers	1	2	3	4
3.	Planning time	1	2	3	4
4.	Level of collaboration	1	2	3	4

TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS = 16

B.	PARENT INVOLVEMENT				
1.	In classrooms	1	2	3	4
2.	In policy making	1	2	3	4
3.	In student evaluation	1	2	3	4
4.	In supporting learning	1	2	3	4
5..	Communication	1	2	3	4

TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS = 20

GRAND TOTAL POSSIBLE = 164

Appendix C

TEACHER INTERVIEW

1. Typical Day? If no, explain.

2. Planning Time: When? Duration? Frequency? With Whom?

3. Assignment of Students to Teachers: Dual Age? Multi-age? 5 year-old Inclusion? Special Needs Inclusion? Family? Multi-year same Teacher?

4. Assessment: Types? Record Keeping? Continuous Progress? Student Self-Assessments? Report Cards? Parent Conferences? Fourth grade Entrance?

5. Parent Involvement: Types? Communication? Assessment? Policy Making? Support for Student Learning?

6. SBDM? When Established? Impact of Decisions on Primary?

7. Critical Attributes: Easy to Implement? Difficult to Implement?
   - Developmentally Appropriate Practices
   - Multi-Age/Multi-Ability Grouping
   - Continuous Progress
   - Authentic Assessment
   - Qualitative Reporting
   - Professional Teamwork
   - Positive Parent Involvement

8. Staff Development: Provided? Needed?

9. Next Step?

10. Anything Else?

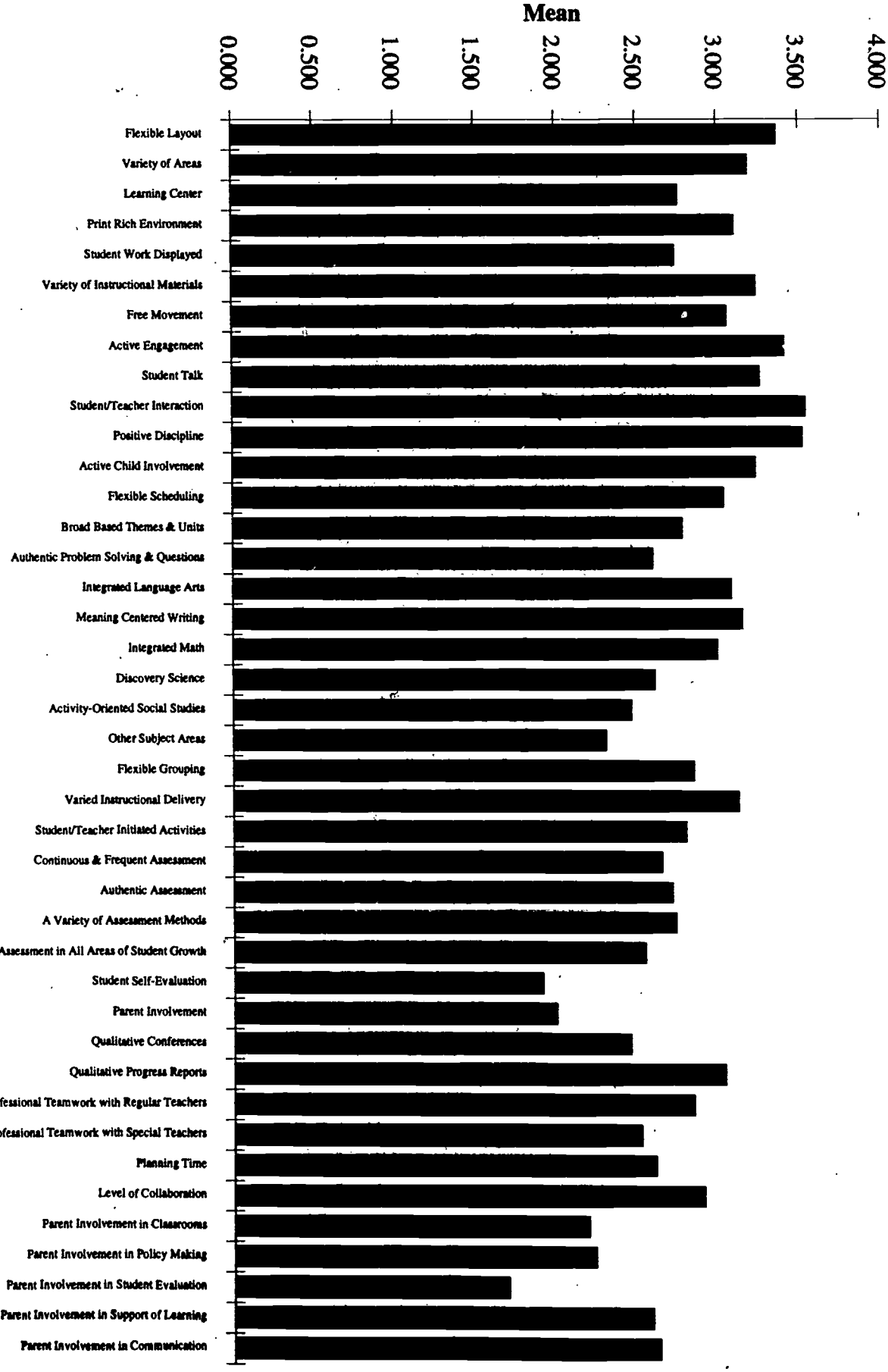
Ask them to fill out one page (5 minute) survey before they leave.

Appendix D

TEACHER SURVEY

Please circle the word that best describes your experiences related to the implementation of the primary program in your school.	None	Limited	Adequate	Extensive
Participation in practical training sessions designed to help you implement the primary school	1	2	3	4
Participation of your principal in the primary school training sessions you have attended	1	2	3	4
Classroom assistance from district staff	1	2	3	4
Assistance from Kentucky Department of Education staff in Frankfort	1	2	3	4
Assistance from the Primary School consultant in your Regional Service Center	1	2	3	4
Assistance from local universities (e.g. workshops, consultants, coursework, materials)	1	2	3	4
Assistance from the cooperative or consortium that serves your district	1	2	3	4
Opportunities to observe in other classrooms, schools or districts	1	2	3	4
Regular staff meetings that focus on practical problems related to implementation of primary school	1	2	3	4
Time to plan and implement the primary school	1	2	3	4
Opportunities to participate in decisions regarding primary school implementation in your school	1	2	3	4
Support from the principal of your school	1	2	3	4
Support from other teachers in your school	1	2	3	4
Support from parents of children in your school	1	2	3	4

Appendix E



Ratings From Primary Classroom Observations